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THE FOOL.

BY THOMAS BRAINLESS, ESQ. LL.D. JESTER TO HIS MAJESTY THE PUBLIC.

Salem, February, 1807.——No. 1.

SKETCH OF A PROSPECTUS

For a new and useless PAPER,

TO BE CALLED

THE FOOL.

IT is an infelicity in social intercourse, that in every transaction of moment some object of utility or amusement is proposed and pursued with such ardour as to elude the vigilance and controul of FOLLY. The community catches the contagion, &c. Inutility in both deed and name can alone be a passport to confidence.

Impressed with this conviction,

TOM BRAINLESS

offers to public patronage, the establishment of a new and blank Paper, to be called

THE FOOL.

The Paper will be devoted to every thing but matter of fact, expression of decided opinion, and serious discussion. It will be a proper vehicle for *advertisements of quack medicines*, with a long list of certificates of cures, as purchasers of such may be reckoned among the firmest supporters of The Fool. A conspicuous place will be reserved for *conundrums, rebusses, acrostics*, (especially if mis-spelt), *enigmatical lists, charades*, and other articles of no stamp. *Unfinished impromptus, with various readings of the same*, we shall always be happy to insert. *Fantastical combinations of letters of the alphabet, without any signification*, shall always grace the first page of The Fool. A column shall be reserved for *blank prose*, where such effusions shall meet a welcome reception and ready insertion. *A miniature almanack, devoted solely to prognostications of the weather*, shall be regularly furnished. *Solutions of acrostics* are respectfully solicited, &c &c. &c.——To be of no particular form or size, issued at irregular intervals; and the price to be left to the generosity of its patrons.

Salem, January 1, 1807.

☞ It will be observed that the present number is made up of the original matter contained in the numbers of the FOOL of January last, and should by good right have been entitled the FOOL EXPRESS, or THE SPIRIT OF THE FOOL, as advertisements have been expunged from it, and as it is designed only for the country.

FOR THE FOOL.

IN days of yore, when such were not so plenty as at the present day, a gentleman had a FOOL by whom he set great store, who one day absconded, to the great regret of his master. All the cunning men far and near were invited by liberal promises to exert themselves in finding the unfortunate runaway, but success crowned not their endeavours. A neighbour and friend of the afflicted gentleman suggested to him the expediency of setting a Fool to catch a Fool, grounded on the old maxim "set a Rogue to catch a Rogue," and, added he, you shall be welcome to my Fool for the purpose. The Fool was accordingly produced and led into a wood, where it was supposed the other had secreted himself: after a few moments he exclaimed "I sees you!" "No, you don't," replied a voice from the thicket. "Yes I does, though," retorted the Fool again. The same reply was repeated, and the hiding place was easily discovered.

MR BRAINLESS,

Learned sir, if you think the above worthy of a place in your invaluable paper, please to insert it and oblige your friend, TOM FOOL.

To Readers.

We shall make copious extracts from *brother* BENTLEY'S Election Sermon.—A few selections from his Register summary, read either backwards or forwards, would make a pretty good Miscellany for the Fool.

Our stenographer did not forward us SLOCUM'S speech in season for this day.

MINIATURE ALMANACK FOR JANUARY.

	Prognostications of Weather, &c.
1	Expect cold weather, snow and some rain, with intervals of moderate and fair weather, about these days.
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10	The Sun rises about as early as usual this time of year.
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30	High Water and Moon's Age may be found in *common* Almanacks.
31	

FASHIONS.

Two Great-Coats, of the same size, colour and quality; the *outside* one nicknamed a *cape*.

With the females, *Bearskin* has taken place of the *bare skin* of last winter.

A kind of *Military Cap* is so frequent, that it appears as if our elegantes had been plundering a camp for the ornament of their persons.

Our belles sport stockings with variegated *clocks*, and it is observed that these are the only *clocks* that will *keep going*, during the intense cold of the present season.

TO THE LADIES.

Whereas Monsier Bonaparte has dished the King of Prussia, and probably frightened the Emperor of Russia so much that he will retreat without attempting any thing, so that the war in Europe will probably soon be ended, and it may be expected that the Corsican usurper, finding himself out of employ there, will attempt the conquest of the United States; to whom it will be very important in that case to have a large number of cavalry; and it will be of equal importance to them the said cavalry to be well supplied with good and sufficient leather breeches. It is presumed that an appeal to the patriotism of the ladies will never be made in vain; and as an encouragement to their exertions and ingenuity, the Editor offers a *Copper Medal* of the full value of 4s6 to the young lady, who shall produce, by the *first day of April* next, the best pair of LEATHER BREECHES, suitable for a Trooper. On that day a competent number of connoissieurs in leather breeches, will be assembled, and an impartial decision made.—It is expected that every lady will attach a note to her performance, in these words: *"Upon my word and honour, I made these Breeches all myself.* A B." Let no lady object that the value of the medal is too small—economy is the republican idol; and the female taste will be gratified one way at least, for a copper medal, worth 4s6, scoured bright, will make no small show.

To the BLACKS of every description, as well Gentlemen as Ladies.

GREETING.

IT is with the purest and most exalted felicity, that we notice the improvement so rapidly introduced in the system of African education. Polite accomplishments and liberal views now universally characterize the African fraternity. Nor is the change vain. It has afforded and will continue to afford the highest satisfaction to the lovers of dusky excellence, that a new race of negroes has arisen. A graceful nasal prominence succeeds the unnatural depression; the peaceful olive has expelled the fiery and warlike red from their smooth and interesting complexion; the curling hair supplies the place of the shaggy wool; all uniting their several improvement to strongly mark the superiority of the present race of negroes over their predecessors. Add to this, the pleasing change in their manners and deportment; the graceful bow where formerly appeared the most provoking impudence; the dignified minuet supplies the place of the vulgar shuffle; fashionable swearing has destroyed the prevalence of unmeaning blackguardism; cards and billiards have expelled the common place tee-totum and chequers—in fact, "in spite of pride and scripture, *the Ethiopian has changed his skin.* All these improvements must unquestionably spring from rational and moderate incitement, and he who duly and carefully increases it is the fast friend of negro excellence. More especially do these remarks apply to the young ladies of colour of this town and vicinity.

Actuated by these sentiments the subscribers propose TWO YELLOW RIBBONS and a 'LECTION CAKE, to be given for the *two best minuets*, one on the feet, and the other on the head, to be danced by two African young ladies; and also TWO PAIR OF PROPS, and a FIDDLE-STICK, for the *two best jiggs*, to be fiddled by two young gentlemen of colour, one to fiddle with the left hand, the other with the right. These exercises are to be performed in presence of a number of literary ladies and gentlemen of colour, whom the subscribers will convene some time towards *the latter end of May*. Each candidate, after performance, must advance towards the judges and making his *(or her)* bow, *(or curtsy)* shall say as follows, viz. "*I solemnly vow that this minuet, which I have now danced,* (or this tune which I have now fiddled) *was danced* (or fiddled) *by me, myself, und nobody else.*"

Our fair readers of colour may safely confide both in the merit of the judges, and in the impartiality of their decisions.

It is indeed a truth, sanctioned by the experience of ages, that though all cannot dance or fiddle equally well, yet by much practise, all may win some improvement. It is hoped that no lady will break her legs in a pet because she cannot be admitted to contend for the fiddling prize, and that no gentleman will break his fiddle-stick because excluded from the list of the dancing games. Let each one rather solace him *(or her)* self, by reflecting that the assertion of the poet, a little amended to their own case, makes the occupation of the one as honourable as that of the other.—Thus our accomplished beaux of colour may exclaim:

Honour nor shame from minuet dancing rise,
Stick to your fiddle—there the honour lies!

And our black fair ones may retort:

Honour and shame from foolish fiddling rise?
No! honour's self in dancing minuets lies!

To excite emulation, and exercise ingenuity, we insert the following enigmatical list of young ladies of colour in Salem.

1.—4-5ths of a cabbage, a vowel, and 3 semi-liquids.

2.—1-3 of a warming pan, and 9-15ths of a tailor's utensil.

3.—A place of public resort, 2 vowels, a jug, and vowels *quant. suff.*

4.—A flower, 6-64ths of an onion, 5 geese and a liquid.

Enigmatical list of dances and dancing tunes.

1.—A colour and a jest.

2.—A thief and a dignified gait.

3.—A colour and a dirty fellow.

4.—A New-Englander, imperative mode of to do, and half of a paddle.

Your true "Friends,"

Essex-Street. CÆSAR & CO.

JANUARY 10, 1807.

Cæsar & Co. fearing they were not sufficiently understood in their proposition for '*prize ribbons*,' &c. beg leave to add, that at the convention of the umpires, during such performances as *do not gain* the prizes, the judges shall have their eyes blinded and their ears stopped; or if the adventurers choose, they may *un*-dance or *un*-fiddle any of their respective essays. We insist the more on this, lest the *delicacy* of a dusky *candidate* might be hurt by the apprehension of a loss of fiddle-sticks, 'lection-cakes, ribbons, preps and glory.

To Correspondents.

The following communications came too late for this day's paper; they shall appear in our next.—"*An enigmatical list of young gentlemen of colour, by Cuffelia.*" "*Enigmatical list of ladies of colour who were once young.*" "*Guinea-peccepology, a parody of Songs of Shepherds.*" "*A Sonnet on* Perfumery, *in the* Mandingo dialect."

"*An enigmatical list of the 3 first letters of the alphabet*" is received. We should be glad to have a solution accompany it, in which case it should have been inserted in this number.

Want of room only prevented our insertion of *Moll*VINA's communication.

MARRIAGES.—None; too cold.—Mercury 10° below 0.

JANUARY 21, 1807.

Cæsar & Co's list of Dancing Tunes answered by
L.Z.R.T.K X. *&c. &c.*

I.

Though various colours greet the wond'ring eye,
When Iris' arch bestrides the rain-fraught sky,
'Tis *black* that suits my purpose best,
And now my friends behold "*Black* * *Jest.*"

2.

And next by explanation true,
The "*Rogue's March*" stands confess'd to view.

3.

The third by the same test is *proven*
No other than the old "*Black Sloven.*"

4.

The fourth doth "*Yankee Doodle*" scan
Joy of each Afric-American.

Answered also by Misses Dinetta A. Violetta B. Phillisina C. and others.

Instead of a *Price Current,* we intended to have given our readers the *Time of Day;* but we found the clocks and watches varied so much, that we were at a loss to know which to follow.—*Quere.*—Could not our philosophical President make the time conform to the town clock?——How the democrats who burned in effigy WASHINGTON and JAY, can tamely see *Jefferson* and *Monroe* sweating so hard to make a treaty with the "tyrants of the sea," is another part of speech.

*Extract of a letter from ****** to the editor of the Fool.*

"Your plan of proposing rewards of *ribbons, 'lection cake,* &c. to the African youth of both sexes. is truly a novel and original idea. And I doubt not we shall be gratified by a rare exhibition of dexterity, grace, skill and activity, the native productions of *Roast Meat Hill.*"

* "*Black* Joke" *is the real name; but the author has,* licentia poetica, *that is "for rhyme's sake," substituted the other.*—"Joke" *might have been preserved, and the last couplet would have made decent blank verse.*

We are happy to find Messrs. TWEEDLEDUM & TWEEDLEDEE have imported a new assortment of *Classical* Hard-Ware. There are many *solid improvements* in this assortment obvious to every man of *feeling.* The *opposition* it meets with from persons of a different *stamp,* though a circumstance to be regretted, is not unexpected. In this assortment the *mouse-traps* have been *figured* throughout—to the utility of which cats will bear ample testimony. An eminent blacksmith has taken the articles apart and put them together in a way peculiar to himself. A number of objects have been added (though as they cost money with a sparing hand). A new *step* is laid to the shop-door, (rather better than none at all) though a customer is still under the necessity of crawling in, on his hands and knees. The *ten-penny nails* have been arranged in alphabetical order, and the outside of the shop has been handsomely adorned with *pick-axes, skillets, knitting needles, warming pans and rat-tail files.*

The band of bravoes who attacked the mail-stage running between Naugus's Head and Baker's Island, was headed by Abaellino, the great bandit.

"Avertising customers are requested, when an advertisement is left without pay," not to expect to have it inserted.

GRAND LOTTERY.

TEN PRIZES TO ONE BLANK ! ! ! ! ! !

100,000 Dollars !
200,000 Dollars !
500,000 Dollars !

besides a great number of *higher* prizes. Persons who are desirous to possess, with certainty, the above charming objects are requested IMMEDIATELY—to attend to their business, and let alone foolish speculations.

MAXIM.

The person who lends This Paper to his neighbour, when his neighbour is able to purchase one is a FOOL.